

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 04463 300141Z

71
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
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O 291336Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8917
INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T AMMAN 4463

EXDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON FROM CHARGE

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: MASS JO SA US
SUBJECT: JORDAN AIR DEFENSE

REF (A) JIDDA 5870, (B) AMMAN 3747 (C) STATE 177830
(D) AMMAN 4124

1. EMBASSYS RECEIPT OF SAUDI FOREIGN MINISTRY NOTE (REFTEL A)
AGREEING TO OUR PROPOSAL REGARDING FINANCING OF JORDANIAN
AIR DEFENSE IN INDEED GOOD NEWS. WE UNDERSTAND NATURALLY
THAT DEAL NOT HOWEVER CONSIDERED FINALIZED UNTIL WE RECEIVE
INITIAL SAG PAYMENT WHICH EMBASSY JIDDA IS NOW REQUESTING

2. WE WILL OF COURSE TAKE NO INITIATIVE TO INFORM KING
OF SAUDI NOTE UNTIL INSTRUCTED BY DEPARTMENT. HOWEVER
I WOULD LIKE FOR DEPARTMENT TO CONSIDER AUTHORIZING ME
TO INFORM KING HUSSEIN OF OUR RECEIPT OF SAUDI POSITIVE
REPLY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND AT LEAST PRIOR TO HIS
PLANNED SEPTEMBER 5 DEPARTURE FOR 10 DAY TRIP TO
ENGLIAND.

3. AMBASSADOR PICKERING TOLD KING HUSSEIN IN THEIR
LAST MEETING (WHICH I ATTENDED) BEFORE AMBASSDORS
DEPARTURE ON HOME LEAVE THAT WE WOULD TRY TO KEEP HIM
INFORMED OF ANY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS ON HAWK FINANCING

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NEGOTIATIONS. ALTHOUGH KING WAS PRIMARLY CONCERNED

OVER GETTING TIMELY RECEIPT OF INITIAL SAUDI PAYMENT SO AS NOT TO DELAY HAWK DELIVERY DATES, KING IS AWARE WE ARE WAITING FOR SAUDI REPLY TO OUR PROPOSAL AS TO FINANCING AND HE WOULD VIEW THIS AS A HEARTENING SIGN OF SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS. BEST NEWS WOULD BE IF WE COULD TELL KING THAT SAG HAS GIVEN US CHECK PRIOR TO KING'S SEPTEMBER 5 DEPARTURE BUT RECOGNIZE THAT RAMADAN MAY MAKE THAT AN UNCERTAIN POSSIBILITY. WHILE I CAN WAIT FOR A FEW DAYS TO SEE WHETHER SAUDI CHECK MATERIALIZES, I BELIEVE ANY SIGNIFICANT DELAY IN INFORMING KING IN GENERAL TERMS OF FACT WE HAVE RECEIVED POSITIVE SAUDI REPLY TO OUR GENERAL FINANCING PROPOSAL COULD LEAD TO MISUNDERSTANDING CONSIDERING HIS INTENSE INTEREST IN SUBJECT AND POSSIBILITY THAT SAUDI WILL INFORM GOJ OR THAT INFORMATION WILL LEAK.

4. QUESTION ARISES OF CURRENT STATUS KING'S INCLINATION IN MID-JULY (REF B) TO ISSUE COMMUNIQUE TO TROOPS AND DEPARTMENTS REPLY (PARA 1 REF C) THAT IT WOULD BE PREMATURE TO MAKE ANNOUNCEMENTS TO TROOPS OR OTHERS UNTIL AIR DEFENSE DETAILS FINALLY WORKED OUT. ALTHOUGH KING HAS NOT PURSUED THIS IDEA IN RECENT PERIOD IT IS OF COURSE CONCEIVABLE HE WOULD BE TEMPTED TO DO SO PRIOR TO HIS SEPTEMBER 5 DEPARTURE IF HE ADHERES TO HIS GENERAL PRACTICE OF COMMUNICATING WITH ARMY PRIOR TO TAKING EXTENDED TRIPS OUTSIDE OF COUNTRY. I WOULD HOPE ANY INSTRUCTIONS I RECEIVE WOULD ALSO ADDRESS THIS POINT.

5. REQUEST DEPARTMENTS INSTRUCTIONS TO INFORM KING HUSSEIN SUBJECT TO AMBASSADOR'S PORTER'S COMMENTS ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

(1) USG HAS NOW RECEIVED WRITTEN REPLY FROM SAG AGREEING TO FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS WE PROPOSED FOR FUNDING THE FULL \$540 MILLION JORDANIAN AIR DEFENSE PROGRAM. OUR EMBASSY IN JIDDA IS MOVING TO OBTAIN INITIAL SAUDI PAYMENT WHICH WE WILL CONSIDER THE FINAL STEP REQUIRED TO COMPLETE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS. IMMEDIATELY AFTER RECEIPT OF INITIAL

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PAYMENT WE WILL BE IN POSITION TO MOVE FORWARD TO BEGIN DETAILED DISCUSSION WITH GOJ, AIMED AT EXPEDITIOUS IMPLEMENTATION OF JORDAN AIR DEFENSE PROGRAM. (IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF I COULD MENTION SOME SPECIFICS CONCERNING THE FINANCIAL TIMETABLE AND THE DOD UMBRELLA PAYMENT CONCEPT BUT DEFER TO DEPARTMENT AND JIDDA AS TO LEVEL OF DETAIL WE SHOULD PROVIDE).

(2) DEPARTMENT HAS REAFFIRMED ITS EARLIER ASSESSEMENT THAT IN ABSENCE OF DIRECT JORDANIAN DISCUSSIONS WITH SAUDI ARABIA ON SUBJECT OF OUR RECEIPT OF INITIAL SAUDI APPOINTMENT WE STILL CONSIDER IT PREMATURE TO ISSUE ANY GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENT AT THIS TIME. THAT ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN FINALIZED IN THIS CONNECTION PRIME MINISTER BADRANS AUGUST 8 PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT (REF D) "(HAWK)" MISSILE DEAL IS ALMOST COMPLETE" WOULD APPEAR TO US TO STILL BE ACCURATE DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT SITUATION.

6. I WOULD BE WILLING TO CONVEY ANY INSTRUCTIONS FROM DEPARTMENT ORALLY TO KING OR IN KING'S ABSENCE TO PRIME MINISTER UNLESS DEPARTMENT DESIRES TO SEND A WRITTEN MESSAGE.

7. REQUEST GUIDANCE.
SUDDARTH

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